

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1144

To amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to require that all meat and meat food products, whether domestic or imported, bear a label notifying the ultimate purchaser of meat and meat food products of the country of origin of the livestock that is the source of the meat and meat food products.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 17, 1999

Mrs. CHENOWETH (for herself, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. TRAFICANT, Mrs. BONO, Mr. SHOWS, Mr. PHELPS, Mr. MICA, Mr. HERGER, Mr. CHAMBLISS, Mr. HILL of Montana, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. LATOURETTE, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. MCHUGH, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. HUNTER, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. WELLER, Mr. WATKINS, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. REGULA, Mr. EVANS, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. WELDON of Florida, Mr. COBURN, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. KAPTUR, and Mr. THUNE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture

A BILL

To amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to require that all meat and meat food products, whether domestic or imported, bear a label notifying the ultimate purchaser of meat and meat food products of the country of origin of the livestock that is the source of the meat and meat food products.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Country-of-Origin
3 Meat Labeling Act of 1999”.

4 **SEC. 2. COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABELING OF MEAT AND**
5 **MEAT FOOD PRODUCTS.**

6 (a) LABELING REQUIRED.—The Federal Meat In-
7 spection Act is amended by inserting after section 7 (21
8 U.S.C. 607) the following new section:

9 **“SEC. 7A. REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO COUNTRY-OF-ORI-**
10 **GIN LABELING.**

11 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

12 “(1) LIVESTOCK.—The term ‘livestock’ means
13 cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, mules, or other
14 equines.

15 “(2) DOMESTIC MEAT.—The term ‘domestic
16 meat’ means a carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or
17 meat food product derived entirely from domestic
18 livestock.

19 “(3) DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK.—The term ‘domes-
20 tic livestock’ means livestock that satisfy all of the
21 following:

22 “(A) The animal is born in the United
23 States.

24 “(B) The animal is raised throughout its
25 entire life in the United States.

1 “(C) The animal is slaughtered and other-
2 wise processed in the United States.

3 “(4) IMPORTED MEAT.—The term ‘imported
4 meat’ means a carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or
5 meat food product that does not satisfy the defini-
6 tion of domestic meat.

7 “(5) IMPORTED LIVESTOCK.—The term ‘im-
8 ported livestock’ means livestock that does not sat-
9 isfy the definition of domestic livestock.

10 “(6) ULTIMATE PURCHASER.—

11 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘ultimate
12 purchaser’, with regard to a carcass, part of a
13 carcass, meat, or meat food product, means—

14 “(i) a person who buys the item for
15 consumption;

16 “(ii) a public or private institution
17 that serves the item for consumption; or

18 “(iii) a restaurant or other food serv-
19 ice establishment that serves the item for
20 consumption.

21 “(B) EXCEPTION.—Other than as provided
22 in clauses (ii) and (iii) of subparagraph (A), the
23 term does not include a person who buys a car-
24 cass, part of a carcass, meat, or meat food
25 product for resale.

1 “(b) COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN LABEL REQUIRED.—

2 “(1) PURPOSE.—Country-of-origin labels are
3 required under this section so that the ultimate pur-
4 chasers of meat and meat food products in the
5 United States are accurately informed of the country
6 of origin of the livestock from which meat and meat
7 food products are derived.

8 “(2) INITIAL USE OF LIVESTOCK.—A packer or
9 processor that uses livestock to produce a carcass,
10 part of a carcass, meat, or meat food product that
11 is offered for sale, sold, or resold within the United
12 States, either in its original form or in a further
13 processed form, shall affix a label to the carcass,
14 part of a carcass, meat, or meat food product that
15 identifies the country or countries in which the live-
16 stock were born, raised, and slaughtered from which
17 the carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or meat food
18 product was derived.

19 “(3) USE OF DOMESTIC MEAT OR IMPORTED
20 MEAT.—A packer or processor that uses domestic
21 meat or imported meat to produce a carcass, part of
22 a carcass, meat, or meat food product that is offered
23 for sale, sold, or resold within the United States, ei-
24 ther in its original form or in a further processed
25 form, shall affix a label to the carcass, part of a car-

1 cass, meat, or meat food product that identifies the
2 country or countries in which the livestock were
3 born, raised, and slaughtered from which the domes-
4 tic meat or imported meat was derived.

5 “(c) MAINTENANCE OF LABEL.—

6 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A packer or processor re-
7 ferred to in subsection (b), and each subsequent re-
8 seller of the carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or
9 meat food product, shall be responsible for ensuring
10 that the country-of-origin label is maintained
11 throughout the chain of distribution until the car-
12 cass, carcass part, meat, or meat food product is
13 sold to the ultimate purchaser.

14 “(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Institutions that serve
15 meat or meat food products for consumption and
16 restaurants and other food service establishments
17 shall neither be required to, nor restricted from, no-
18 tifying their customers of the country of origin of
19 the meat or meat food products they serve.

20 “(d) RESTRICTION ON USE OF UNITED STATES
21 MEAT LABEL.—A carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or
22 meat food product may not bear a label identifying the
23 carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or meat food product as
24 United States meat unless it consists entirely of domestic
25 meat.

1 “(e) TREATMENT OF IMPORTED MEAT AND IM-
2 PORTED LIVESTOCK.—In the case of imported meat, the
3 country-of-origin label required by this section shall also
4 identify the country or countries from which the livestock,
5 carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or meat food product (as
6 the case may be) was imported into the United States.
7 In the case of live imported livestock imported into the
8 United States for slaughter, whether fed for a time in the
9 United States and slaughtered or imported only for
10 slaughter, the country-of-origin label shall also identify the
11 country or countries from which the livestock were im-
12 ported into the United States.

13 “(f) TREATMENT OF BLENDED PRODUCTS.—In the
14 case of a blended meat or meat food product, the country-
15 of-origin label required by this section shall list the coun-
16 try or countries of origin of the livestock from which the
17 blended meat or meat food product was derived, in de-
18 scending order of predominance therein.

19 “(g) LABEL DESCRIPTION AND PLACEMENT.—In the
20 case of a carcass, part of a carcass, meat, or meat food
21 product offered for sale to an ultimate purchaser, the
22 country-of-origin label shall be placed on the carcass, part
23 of the carcass, meat, or meat food product, or its imme-
24 diate package or container, in such a location that the
25 label is clearly visible to the ultimate purchaser. The coun-

1 try-of-origin lettering shall be of a size at least equal to
2 other lettering contained on the carcass, meat, or meat
3 food product, or its immediate package or container.

4 “(h) RELATION TO INSPECTION STAMP.—An inspec-
5 tion stamp required under section 7 shall not be a sub-
6 stitute for the country-of-origin label, and shall not be rep-
7 resented by anyone as proof or certification of the country
8 of origin of the livestock from which a carcass, part of
9 a carcass, meat, or meat food product is derived.”.

10 (b) INCLUSION OF COUNTRY-OF-ORIGIN REQUIRE-
11 MENTS IN DEFINITION OF MISBRANDED.—Section 1(n) of
12 the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601(n)) is
13 amended—

14 (1) by striking “or” at the end of paragraph
15 (11);

16 (2) by striking the period at the end of para-
17 graph (12) and inserting “; or”; and

18 (3) by adding at the end the following new
19 paragraph:

20 “(13) if it fails to bear a country-of-origin label
21 as required by section 7A.”.

22 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
23 this section shall take effect 60 days after the date of en-
24 actment of this Act.

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